

# BILLY WHISKERS

By FRANCES MONTGOMERY

Billy was still running toward the front when all of a sudden he pitched head foremost into a deep ditch filled with soldiers. They paid not the slightest attention to him, for they were too busy loading their rifles and firing over the top of the ditch. And as Billy stood there, he saw men drop and others take their places without a word being spoken. Every face was pale and set in hard lines as the bombs burst over them, shot rained down on them and the dust from the top of the trench poured down and blinded them, but they never stopped shooting for a second, but worked like machines, loading, firing, loading, firing, until Billy thought they would drop from fatigue.

**Billy Is Hit**  
"Gee, something stung my ear!" thought Billy, and presently a little stream of warm blood ran down Billy's nose, leaving a red mark on his white hair. "Well, I never! I've been shot and it did not hurt so very much after all. I've been hurt worse lots of times. Just the same, I guess I'll get out of here. I think my curiosity has been satisfied enough for one day." And he started to run behind the men to find a way out of the trench. He ran and ran and ran, until he thought this trench must reach half way around the world, when he saw a black hole in the ground into which this trench seemed to run. He hurried on, and found himself in a narrow, dark passage, but he kept on, hoping to see daylight ahead of him soon. But he saw none, and what dismayed him most was that he kept on coming to short flights of steps and they all led down into the earth, with tiers and tiers of narrow passages that ran both to the right and left of them. One of these steps led up.

"If some of these steps don't run up pretty soon I am going to follow one of these passages that run to the right and left of this flight of steps," decided Billy.

This he did, and he found it brought him to a little room, only big enough for one man, and in many of them he saw a poor, tired soldier sleeping with all the dust and grime of battle on him. Keeping on, he came to larger rooms, used as officers' quarters. Some were storerooms, barber shops, kitchens and dining rooms.

"Well, I declare! I never thought I would find soldiers living underground. So, without knowing where I was going, I have gotten into one of the guarded French strongholds! I bet I am in the underground parts of some big fortress. Just the same, I would like to get out, for I don't like living underground in the dark like a rat, though I do see they have lights to light some of the passages." "I feel a little breath of fresh air," he said. "I guess I must be coming to an opening that leads outdoors." But no; when he went on a little farther he found the air came from an air shaft.

"I certainly wish I could get out of here before a big bomb hits this place and blows a hole through it, letting all the dirt fall in and bury me alive," and Billy ran as he had never run in his life, up one passage and down another, until at last he saw a narrow flight of steps that led upward.

**He Runs Up**

"Oh, joy! At last I have found some steps that go up instead of down!" and he simply tore up them, he went so fast. They brought him to a very crooked passage which led to another flight of steps. Then more crooked passages and another flight of stairs. And so it went until at last he came to a very long, low, narrow passage which came out behind a big rock on ground level. And Billy sent up a prayer of thanksgiving from his heart at his release and the joy of feeling the fresh air fan his face once more. Though it smelled strongly of powder and he was in danger of being blown to pieces every minute, he preferred it to being underground. Shells and bombs sent high up in the air splinters of wood, dirt, stones, shot and shrapnel were falling around him, and by the weird glare of the lights of the battle he could see airships darting overhead.

Here he was in the midst of one of the most terrific battles the world has ever known. Still he escaped unhurt, lucky mascot that he was. And what an experience it would be to relate to his friends, family, children and grandchildren when he returned home to America!

A whining, whistling, tearing thing came flying through the air toward Billy. He was too fascinated looking at it to move. But had he known that it was a death-dealing shell from one of the enemy's biggest guns, he would have run instead of standing still to watch it.

Plunk! it went into the ground only a hundred feet from him. And the next he knew, he was flying up in the air along with dirt, sticks and stones, to the roaring, tearing sound of an exploding shell. Billy came down in almost the same place, but instead of finding the solid ground beneath him which he had left, he came down on the edge of a deep hole, deep enough and wide enough to bury a big church. And as he stood there looking down into the hole, other shells were falling near him. Just then a dog ran by him and barked "Follow me unless you want to be blown to pieces!"

And Billy started after the dog, but he had a hard time to even keep him in sight, let alone keep up with him, fast runner as he was, for the dog stretched himself out and ran close to the ground. Being much the same color as the ground—brown marked with black—it was almost impossible to see him in the uneven light. For the only light there was came from the bursting shells, bombs and searchlights that nearly blinded one; the next, total darkness as its rays moved on. And Billy was just about to give up and try to follow the dog when he

stopped and waited for Billy to overtake him.

"Excuse me, friend, for running away from you. I forgot I was traveling so fast. I was thinking so hard that, for the minute, I forgot everything but the terrible slaughter and damage those big guns are making, and what a lot of soldiers I shall probably find wounded and needing my help lying out there in No-Man's-Land when the firing ceases."

"Oh, you are a Red Cross dog, then, aren't you? I have heard the soldiers telling about you dogs and what wonderful work you have done on the battlefields. And I want to tell you how delighted I am to meet you."

**He Is Mascot**

"And how comes it," asked the dog, "that a goat of your size and handsome appearance has escaped the butcher's knife and the camp cook's when they are so in need of meat?"

"I'll tell you. I only arrived in France a short time ago, and I am with the American soldiers. Besides, I am the mascot of a regiment, and the soldiers have protected me from the butchers, cooks and others who would kill me."

"Well, well, well! I am more than pleased to make your acquaintance. I too have heard of you since your regiment landed. If I am not mistaken, you are the celebrated Billy Whiskers, mascot of Company —"

"You have struck the nail on the head! That is just who I am."

"Whiz! Bang! Bang! Bang!" sounded near them.

"We better get out of here and find a safer place to talk," said the dog. "Follow me and I will take you to a high hill that overlooks the battlefield, from the top of which we can see our line of battle and the enemy's as well. I won't run so fast this time."

"I thought I was a fast runner and that I could keep up with any dog that ever was born," said Billy, "but I can't keep up with you."

"That is not strange, as I was trained to run fast to catch criminals, and I have a medal for being the fastest runner of all the dogs in the kennels around New York City."

"New York City? Why, what do you, a French dog, know of New York City?"

"Tuesday the dog will tell Billy his story."

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# STORIES

The outcome of the coming battle between Tommy Gibbons and Georges Carpenter is one of the main topics of conversation among followers of the leather pushers these days.

One thing can be said of Carpenter. He has his heart set on giving his best in the forthcoming melee for the simple reason that upon his work against Gibbons, win or lose, depends his immediate future in the American ring.

"A victory for Carpenter will open the floodgates of wealth to him again. It may even lead to another battle with Dempsey, should Harry Willis fail to measure up in any battle he has before September."

Despite the bittah, bittah words of manager Billy Gibson, Carpenter will meet Gene Tunney immediately after the Gibbons bout, win or lose. Should he lick the St. Paul battler, however, Dapper Georges can demand a pretty penny for that scrap—and get it. Then he can book himself for as many more bouts as he wants.

Hollis Thurston, Brown discard and now budding pitcher with the Chicago White Sox, possesses a "screw ball" delivery that compares closely with the "fadeaway" shoot that Christy Mathewson teased batters with in his career.

Oscar Stanaev, veteran catcher and mainstay of the Tigers for many years, is essaying a come-back behind the plate for Toronto in the International league these days. Stanaev got his chance when Mike Vincent was injured. He has been catching and hitting brilliantly.

Connie Mack cares little for jazz music. But he can be heard singing almost constantly these days "Sitting in the cellar, that's all I do."

The Browns may not turn the New York Yankees back this season—and the American league flag, but the St. Louis team of 1924 stacks up stronger by several victories than that of 1922, which finished one lone victory behind the New Yorkers.

Sisler's boys showed their strength recently when they ran through a string of 13 games with but two defeats.

Several big league clubs now have, or have boasted of, shifts in the outfield and at first base, the players being changed as righthanders and southpaws pitch. Sisler has introduced a variation of this idea. He has a third base shift. Robertson, a rookie, plays the far corner against righthanders. Ellerbe, who has had considerable experience the last couple of seasons in the Brown infield, goes to third against southpaws.

The way the Browns are stumbling along these days leads one to believe that the Tigers and Indians may find themselves out of second money if the Yanks do cop. And Sisler's men right now seem to be of championship caliber themselves—or very near it.

Francis T. Hunter may not be the greatest tennis player in Uncle Sam's domain, but he must be conceded the hardest driver in this country of ours. He owes his prominence in the game mainly to his terrific service and bullet-like forehand returns. Hunter showed his skill last summer when he finished as runner-up to Little Bill Johnston in the world's championship tourney at Wimbledon, England.

Urban Shocker, astute pitcher of the plunging St. Louis Browns, is having the laugh on the champion Yanks and other clubs in the A. L. these days. For Babe Ruth, his gang and the other sluggers of the circuit are just waking up to the fact that Shocker has been doing a neat job of bluffing them.

Shocker is one of the few pitchers in the big show who is permitted to use the spitball, ruled out some years ago. He is a master at the wet delivery, too. Ever since he came into his own as a major league slab artist he has depended much on that shoot. This year the batters proceeded on the assumption that he was still using it. Shocker apparently was mixing it with his curve and fast ball.

Now it leaks out that Urban has been bluffing most of the time—has been going through the motions without wetting the ball. The batters, expecting the weird jump evoked by the moistening of a spot on the sphere, have been at a loss to figure out the "hop."

Shocker always has been a heady, heavy pitcher. He comes closer to Christy Mathewson in that way than any other hurler in the show, outside of Walter Johnson.

Billy Gibson, manager of Benny Leonard, lightweight king, announces ferociously that the champ intends to retire next fall and that he will engage in only "two or three more fights" before hanging up the gloves.

"Dear me, Billy! Should we get all excited and dash out and buy tickets for any fight that Benny might get in before then?"

Such retirement stuff is the bunk. Just what the object in such an announcement can be is unknown. Leonard has been a great champion. He has proved himself one of the best lightweights the game has known—if not the best. His passing, under any circumstances, will be regretted. But the public wants to see him fight while he is champ. News that he will retire—coming as he is in virtual retirement due to movie contracts—draws little sympathy.

Not many years ago Shamus O'Brien was enjoying considerable popularity and no small amount of fame as a lightweight boxer. Now he's training his oldest son, one of his nine children, in the flat and hopes to see the youngster climb higher than his dad did. There's one man at least who figures his own game was as good as the other fellows'.

**THAT'S DIFFERENT**

The mistress was attracted to the kitchen by a terrible clatter and evident sounds of scuffling. When she arrived the room was deserted except for the cook.

"My, Nora, what was all that noise I heard out here?" anxiously questioned the lady.

"You see, mum, the policeman just tried to kiss me."

"Oh, and you were compelled to use force to prevent him?"

"Well, not exactly, mum, but you see, the ice man . . ."

Ladies' and gents' white shoes cleaned and shined.—Roi-Tan.—Adv.

**IN HONOR OF MRS. KREBBS**

Mrs. Charles Wentz of Chestnut street entertained Thursday at luncheon in honor of Mrs. Emma Krebbs of Detroit, Mich.

Places were marked at the beautifully decorated table for the honoree, and Mrs. Styer of Alhambra, Mrs. Ernest Jensen, Mrs. Fred Springman, Mrs. Bessie Piltz and Mrs. Emma Whipple, of Los Angeles; Mrs. Julius Schultz, Mrs. Mabel Pestor, and the hostess.

**TORRANCE—TORRANCE chamber**

The directors of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce Tuesday afternoon unanimously approved the \$35,000,000 school bond issue on which citizens of the Los Angeles district, which includes Torrance, will vote next Monday.

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Sunday guests of Mrs. Josephine Aber of Arizona street were Mrs. Belle McBride and son.

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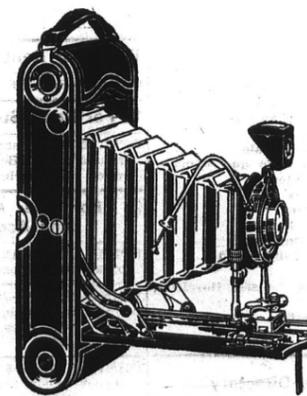
THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, June 5-6  
William S. Hart

—in—  
"SINGER JIM MCKEE"  
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SATURDAY, JUNE 7  
John Bowers, Marjorie Daw, Frankie Lee and a Big Cast

—in—  
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